

REMARKS

Claims 30, 32-36 and 45 are pending. By this amendment, claim 30 has been amended and claims 46-50 have been added. In the Office Action dated August 24, 2007, the Examiner took the following action: (1) rejected claims 30, 33-35 and 45 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,067,561 to Dillon ("Dillon") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,275,848 to Arnold ("Arnold") and what is well known in the art; (2) rejected claim 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dillon and Arnold and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,385,644 to Devine et al. ("Devine"); and (3) rejected claim 36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dillon and Arnold and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,317,485 to Homan et al. ("Homan").

The Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the telephone interview conducted on November 19, 2007. During the interview the Applicant and the Examiner discussed the Arnold reference and claim 45. The Applicant and the Examiner did not come to an agreement. In addition, the Examiner suggested that the Applicant look at U.S. Patent No. 6,839,741 to Tsai.

The embodiments disclosed in the present application will now be discussed in comparison to the cited references. Of course, the discussion of the disclosed embodiments, and the discussion of the differences between the disclosed embodiments and the cited references, does not define the scope or interpretation of any of the claims. Instead, such discussed differences merely help the Examiner appreciate important claim distinctions discussed thereafter.

The present application is directed toward a method and system for distributing email communications to multiple recipients. In one embodiment, the system receives emails to be distributed to one or more recipients, centrally stores a single copy of the message and sends each recipient a short indicator message to notify the recipient that the message is available. The system also tracks and manages requests from the recipients. For example, the recipient can provide instructions to the system, such as to save the message to the server or delete the message from the server.

The Arnold reference is directed toward a method of detaching an email attachment based on certain detaching rules. The attachment is placed on a server where the

recipient can access the attachment via a link in the text of the email. The Examiner claims that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to store a single copy of the email itself rather just the attachment. The Arnold reference, however, teaches away from such a modification. In particular, the Arnold reference teaches storing attachments to the server that have non-text data formats in order to overcome the text only character format limitations of ASCII, which is used in the text of the email. Column 1, lines 12-37. Therefore, the Arnold reference teaches away from storing a single copy of the email itself because the email is already in ASCII format and thus there is no reason to store the email itself to the server. In addition, the Arnold reference states that the attachments are formatted documents such as spreadsheets, bitmap graphics, a CAD drawing, a sound file, or an executable program. Furthermore, the Arnold reference states that the pointer to the attachment is in the *text of the email message*, indicating that there the email message itself must be sent to the recipient or else the recipient would not receive the pointer to the attachment. (Emphasis Added) Column 3, lines 57-60. Therefore, the Arnold reference teaches away from storing the email message to the server.

Evening assuming that Arnold does not teach away from storing a single copy of an email message, the Arnold reference does not disclose tracking each recipient's instructions. In the Arnold reference, access to an attachment stored on the server is based on an access list. The recipients name may be deleted from the access list or may occur automatically after the first access. Once all of the recipients have accessed the attachment, the attachment is deleted from the server. Column 4, lines 44-57. The sender of the message may define the access rights for each recipient. The rights may be to read only, read and save only, or read and save the file. The access list does not, however, track a recipient's instructions, such as an instruction to save the file to the server or to delete the file from the server. Rather, the access list merely gives each recipient access to the file. For instance, the access list may give each recipient access to save the file, however, it does not track that the recipient saved the file. Therefore, the Arnold reference fails to disclose or fairly suggest tracking each recipient's instruction.

Turning now to the claims, the patentably distinct differences between the cited references and the claim language will be specifically pointed out. Claims 30 and 45 recited, in part, "providing an Email communication program on a server that is configured with instructions to store a *single copy of the Email communication on the server* if the Email

communication is designated for the plurality of recipients" (Emphasis Added). Neither the Arnold reference nor the Dillon reference in combination or by themselves discloses or fairly suggests the above limitation. The Arnold reference discloses storing an attachment to the email on the server and teaches away from storing the actual email itself. As alluded to above, the Arnold reference teaches away from storing ASCII formatted emails because the purpose of storing the attachments is to overcome formatting issues that are not available with the ASCII format used in email message. In addition, the pointer to the email is located in the text of the email itself, which indicates that the email itself must be sent to the recipient for the recipient to receive an attachment notification. The Dillon reference does not make up for what is missing in the Arnold reference. Therefore, claims 30 and 45 are allowable over the Arnold reference and the Dillon reference.

Claims 30 and 45 recite, in part, "tracking each recipient's delete or save instruction." Neither the Arnold reference nor the Dillon reference by themselves or in combination discloses or fairly suggests the above limitation. As alluded to above, the Arnold reference discloses an access list, however, the access list does not have the ability to track delete and save instructions from the recipient. The access list is merely able to provide access to the recipient and track which recipients have accessed the list, but it is not able to track delete and save instructions from the recipient. The Dillon reference does not make up for what is missing in the Arnold reference. Therefore, claim 30 and 45 are allowable over the Arnold reference and the Dillon reference.

New claims 46-50 have been added to depend on claim 45. Support for the subject matter of claims 46-50 can be found in the specification, including the figures and originally filed claims. Claims depending from claim 30 and 45 are also allowable due to depending from an allowable base claim and further in view of the additional limitations recited in the dependent claims.

All of the claims remaining in the application are clearly allowable. Favorable consideration and a timely Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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